

(d) whether it is also a fact that recently a woman business delegation of India visited Russia to increase trade between the two countries;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) whether there are any plans to open a chain of stores of Indian goods which was in operation during Soviet Union under the name 'Ganga'; and

(g) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH):

(a) to (c) The India-Russian bilateral trade has increased by 39.3% from US\$ 1.95 billion in 2004-05 to US\$ 2.72 billion in 2005-06. However, with a view to further increase the two countries' bilateral trade turnover to US\$ 10 billion by 2010, a Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation between the Minister of Commerce and Industry and the Minister of Economic Development and Trade of the Russian Federation has been signed on 6th February, 2006 to set up a Joint Study Group (JSG) between India and Russia to prepare a programme on significant increase of mutual trade turnover between India and Russia with an overall objective of diversifying and strengthening the bilateral relations in a wide range of areas, particularly with regard to trade in goods and services, investment and economic cooperation as well as feasibility to conclude the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Russian Federation.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. A 22 member FICCI Ladies Organization (FLO) business delegation visited Russia from 11th to 18th August, 2006 led by its President Ms. Mukta Mandani Jain. During the visit, they held meetings and discussions with various business organizations and associations.

(f) and (g) The Government of India has no such plans to open retail chain in Russia. Opening a chain of private stores of Indian goods in Russia is a matter of Russian retail trade, which may be driven by private industry and initiative.

Adverse effect on FTAs on Virginia tobacco growers

12. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that Andhra Pradesh Virginia tobacco growers are being adversely affected due to Free Trade Agreements with some countries;

(b) whether Government are holding any discussion in this regard;

(c) what steps will be taken to exempt such products from Free Trade Agreements which will negatively impact Andhra farmers; and

(d) what steps will be taken to review all such Free Trade Agreements which negatively affect farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE,
MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH):

(a) There is no adverse effect of Free Trade Agreements on the Andhra Pradesh Virginia tobacco growers. The average price realization by growers and the export of FCV tobacco is improving every year.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) While entering into FTAs with various countries, the interests of farmers are kept uppermost in mind.

Promotion of trade and export

†13. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are planning to spend money for promotion of trade and export in foreign countries during the years 2005-06 and 2006-07; and

(b) the details of industries of Madhya Pradesh selected for this purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE,
MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH):

(a) Yes, Sir. For export promotion, assistance is provided under Market Development Assistance and Market Access Initiative schemes.

(b) Under MDA and MAI schemes, assistance is provided to EPCs and other Approved Trade Bodies and Agencies. No specific industry or company is selected.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.